(c) and (d) As part of its ongoing counter-terrorism cooperation with the United States through a bilateral Joint Working Group, established in January 2000, the two sides share assessment on infiltration and other indicators of Pakistan's support to cross-border terrorism in India

Russia, UK and USA's efforts to defuse Indo-Pak tension

941. SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Russia, UK and United States have made a number of proposals to India to defuse the crisis and have suggested a number of measures including joint patrolling on LoC;

(b) if so, whether these proposals were rejected by India;

(c) whether India has given any time-frame for Pakistan to stop infiltration before taking any action;

(d) if so, the time given to Pakistan; and

(e) whether any assurance was given to India in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (e) President of Pakistan made commitments on January 12, May 27 and June 6 to end cross border infiltration on a permanent basis, not allow the territory of Pakistan to be used for terrorism anywhere in the world and not to allow any organization to indulge in terrorism in the name of Kashmir.

There is support for India's position that should Pakistan be serious about implementing its commitments, joint border patrolling provides and effective bilateral mechanism for control and verification.

Several countries, including Russia, UK and US have called for reduction in tension. They have also emphasised that ending cross border infiltration and terrorism by Pakistan was a necessary condition for such reduction in tension.

Creation of a separate department for overseas Indians

942. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA' :Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for creating a separate Department in his Ministry to look after the problems and interests of overseas Indians;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government would consider such a proposal, if requested?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) A separate Non Resident Indian (NRI)/Persons fo Indian Origion (PIO) Division was established in the Ministry of External Affairs in April, 2000 as a major initiative of the Govenrnment to foster closer relationship with the Overseas Indian Community. The new Division is responsible for formulating appropriate policies for deepening linkages with NRIs and overseas Indians, for encouraging their participation in the development of the country in various fields including investment, education, culture, science & technology etc. It also acts as an inter-face between the organizations and associations of overseas Indians abroad and the Govt. of India. It acts as the coordinator of activities of other Ministries and Organisations dealing with subjects of interest to overseas Indians.

(c) Does not arise.

British opinion about Kashmir

943. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news analysis published in 'The Hindu' dated the 4th June, 2002 under the caption, "British opinion not with India on Kashmir";

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to impress upon the British Government and drive home the point that so far as India is concerned, Kashmir was a settled issue *vis-a-vis* the position taken by British Foreign Secretary that Kashmir was an unfinished business?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The position of the British Government on this issue has been clarified form time to time and most recently by UK Foreign Secretary